

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Governmental
and Public Affairs

Major News Releases and Speeches

Oct. 7 - Oct. 14, 1983

IN THIS ISSUE:

Remarks—

Prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block before the Third World Wilderness Congress in Inverness, Scotland, Oct. 9.

Prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block before the Annual Meeting of the National Renderers Association, Inc., Chicago, Ill., Oct. 14.

News Releases—

USDA Ends Pecan Marketing Order Proceedings

Economist to Present Morrison Memorial Lecture

USDA Establishes Grade Standards for Pumpkin

Additional Expansion Approved for 1984 Crop Insurance Programs

U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
NATL. INFO. CENTER
NOV 3 1983

Remarks

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

**Prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block
before the Third World Wilderness Congress in Inverness, Scotland,
Oct. 9.**

It is difficult to discuss wilderness in the realities of our present-day age without first gaining a full appreciation of its historical significance.

Wilderness, first and foremost, was the arena in which the civilizations of man were slowly shaped. For thousands of years, man challenged the forces of nature.

They were the enemy. But as we began to understand these forces, as we began to work with and around nature, they became less of an enemy.

This benevolent idea of wilderness came to life first in the minds of poets and philosophers centuries ago. Eventually it took on the aura of heritage.

In 1905, that heritage concept began to develop as national policy in the United States. Forest reserves, which were set aside by Congress earlier, became national forests. And a new agency—the U.S. Forest Service—was established in the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The National Park Service, as part of the U.S. Department of the Interior, was established in 1916. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge System—also in the U.S. Department of the Interior—was set up in the 1930s. The Forest Service, the National Park Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service were all later to play prominent roles in designating and managing wilderness areas.

The idea for a special designation as "wilderness" came when two Forest Service employees suggested that certain areas be set aside, away from the threat of roads and vehicles and any forms of developed recreation. In the next couple of decades, other areas were added to the wilderness list.

In the 1950s, a citizen organization called the Wilderness Society, along with other support from inside and outside government, concluded that areas designated wilderness by administrative action

could be un-designated in the same way. They urged statutory designation of the areas.

As you might guess, this idea of "locking up" vast natural resources was not universally embraced. After all, the nation stood on the threshold of a great period of industrial growth after World War II.

After eight years of discussion, debate and hearings, Congress concluded the nation was ready for a wilderness system established by law. This landmark legislation, the Wilderness Act of 1964, stated that the purpose was "to assure that increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States."

In developing the legislation, some compromises had to be made, considering the conflict in which the new law was forged. Grazing, mineral exploration, oil and gas leasing and some previously established uses all were allowed to continue—at least for a time.

The nucleus of the new wilderness system was already in place in the national forests. This was the result of prior departmental actions. Some 9.1 million acres (over 368,000 hectares), all located in national forests, were instantly proclaimed part of the system.

Directions were also given in the 1964 law for study of other national forest areas, plus areas under the the National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service. These studies were to be made with a view toward recommending these areas for possible addition to the wilderness system.

So ended the first chapters of this bold experiment. I emphasize "chapters," since the book on the U.S. wilderness system is still being written.

Since 1964, Congress has designated many additions to the system. The current 264 designated wildernesses encompass 80 million acres (over 32 million hectares) of federal land. This is almost 3-1/2 percent of the surface area of the United States. Some 56 million acres (22.4 million hectares), or roughly 70 percent of the system, are in Alaska.

Growth and debate over the wilderness system still had not abated. Under a 1976 law, the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management is studying the land it administers for the purpose of recommending to Congress some additions to the wilderness system.

There is also strong controversy about proposals to make further additions to wilderness from the national forests.

Let me mention now some of the reasoning used to justify diversion of land from potential production of nonwilderness goods and services. Keep in mind, I'm talking about a land base larger than many countries of the world. Some consider the designation of so much wilderness as prodigal, stemming from an embarrassment of riches.

However, there is more validity and importance to the action than that. We are learning lessons that will be of value not only to us, but to the international community.

First of all, natural benchmarks—even though they are in flux—are useful for measuring the effects of various developmental actions on nonwilderness land. Wilderness is relatively independent of human influences, generally uncultivated and uninhabited—shaped only by the interactions of air on water, water on soil, soil on plant and animal. All are dependent on each other in a mix of constant natural change.

We use the wilderness for scientific, educational and recreational purposes. But we do not modify it. Therefore, it has special value as a scientific yardstick and possibly as a gene pool. It is useful to be able to compare modified environments with those perpetuated in near-natural condition.

Quantities of data, valuable to the scientist, are likely to be contained in these wildland resources, which are no longer available elsewhere. In other words, wilderness areas can serve as benchmarks against which we can model and predict favorable and adverse impacts of developmental works on land elsewhere.

A second, more subtle, value of wilderness is sociological. Wilderness is a place where people can isolate themselves from human activity if they wish. For most people, wilderness probably is simply a magnificent natural arena for rest and recreation—away from the pressures of society.

As you can readily understand, wilderness is not a concept which is universally embraced. Many people perceive wilderness in the same context as art and music—nice but not absolutely necessary. And still others are indifferent to wilderness.

Many who acknowledge and appreciate the wilderness concept, still question how much is needed or can be afforded. This is especially true

in the face of obvious uses to which land can be put. For instance, the United States is not richly endowed with certain rare minerals critical to implementing modern technology which is particularly applicable to national defense.

It may be that some deposits of critically rare minerals exist in already designated wilderness areas. But so long as wilderness areas are closed to exploration, we will never know.

Although the Wilderness Act authorizes mineral surveys by the U.S. Geological Survey—an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior—adequate funding to conduct such exploration is most unlikely.

The United States today is not self-sufficient in oil. Yet, the 3-1/2 percent of the nation's land base restricted in the exploration and development may well include the very places where rich pools of undiscovered oil exist.

These concerns have been expressed in the decades of debate over the issue. They will be questioned even more sharply as other countries consider establishing wilderness systems. Populations in many countries are struggling desperately to provide the basic needs of food, fuel, clothing and shelter. These needs all are products of the land, and they must be served first.

However, a key consideration leading to acceptance of wilderness by many in the United States is that the wilderness resource is enduring. If situations change—if needs for food, fiber, minerals and fuel become so overwhelming they cannot be met by the land available—wilderness will still be there, as a last resort. Meanwhile, we will be prompted to do a better job of managing the other land resources, so as to avoid having to invade the wilderness.

Despite this altruistic approach for the future, Americans are not ignoring the present. The continuing debate over wilderness is now focused on two matters: How much wilderness is enough? And, what management practices should be followed in retaining the qualities in the wilderness we have designated?

The issue of designating more wilderness is continuing in the U.S. due to the continued existence of rather large roadless areas. There also are numerous proposals to designate wilderness in areas which have

returned to a natural state after initial disturbances for logging, ranching or even farming.

Another complexity in the debate affects wilderness areas already designated. Experience shows that a wilderness resource needs management, even though the terms "wilderness" and "management" may appear to be contradictory.

One such management action is the administrative problem of protecting the wilderness areas from the very people for whom they were set aside. With the growing popularity of wilderness for recreation, some of the areas have become so heavily used they are in danger of being loved to death. This is particularly true of wilderness near large population centers.

As a result, in some areas federal land managers have had to institute permit systems and other controls. Limitations on group sizes, length of stays and use of certain overworked camping sites have become necessary.

Such measures are instituted only as necessary, and land managers are finding they can minimize this necessity through public education. Wilderness managers are seeking changes in human behavior to assure that few traces are left by wilderness visitors. We call it "no-trace camping," by which, for example, visitors pack out everything they take in.

Still another management challenge, and also cause for national debate, is the role of fire. We recognize that fire, for thousands of years, has been part of wilderness. It is not always a destructive force. In fact, complete control of wildfire in wilderness has caused some unnatural conditions, such as buildup of downed trees and other forest debris. This could be the source of extensive destruction if uncontrollable fires or insect and disease epidemics break out.

Researchers and managers are jointly studying areas where fire has been a significant natural influence. Their objective is to determine the effects of planned or naturally-caused fires which burn under controlled conditions.

We in the United States are proud of our wilderness system. We recognize that our young country and its vast land resources provide options not available to some countries. However, similar opportunities are still available to most nations.

Many nations still have spectacular big-game resources or tropical plants and animals considerably more diverse than that enjoyed by Americans. These things are decidedly worth protecting and managing.

In conclusion, Americans are thankful to have a legacy of our nation's natural heritage. It's one that can be enjoyed and used today, and then passed on to future generations. With balance and planning, the system is working.

Its creation was not easy, but its success may provide an example to other countries in devising similar systems suited to their own resources, needs, and desires. We now have a body of experience and knowledge that can help other countries in their efforts.

I can think of nothing finer to pass on to future millions than the rich heritage of well-managed natural resources. It's a worldwide legacy of resource use which includes food, fiber, wildlife, quality water—and wilderness. It will be tangible proof that we cared for them too.

Thank you.

#

**Prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block
before the Annual Meeting of the National Renderers Association,
Inc., Chicago, Ill., Oct. 14.**

I am pleased to share in this 50th Anniversary of your association. I salute you for the long history of service as a part of the U.S. livestock industry.

Your industry has demonstrated that you can "make a silk purse from a sow's ear." By using the by-products of the meat packing industry, you have transformed what was once only a problem into a \$2 billion annual contribution to the U.S. economy.

You also perform a value-added function of great benefit to livestock producers, and to those industries who use tallow and fatty acids in the production of pharmaceuticals ... soap and paint ... plastics and lubricants ... high-energy livestock feeds and hundreds of other useful products.

You are meeting tonight at a time when your industry faces many challenges, many changes. There is an excessive supply of oil worldwide. Tallow, palm oil, tung oil, petroleum, soybean oil, cottonseed oil, sunflower oil—you name it. Competition for both domestic and export markets is vigorous.

We all know that a healthy rendering industry requires a balance between supply and use. The export market is an integral part of this equation.

U.S. production of these products has ranged from 3.6 to 3.8 million metric tons during the calendar years 1979-1982. Estimated 1983 production is 3.9 million metric tons.

However, U.S. consumption has declined from a high of 2.3 million metric tons in 1980 to 2.2 million metric tons in 1982. Fortunately, increased edible usage by both the fast food and prepared food industries—and inedible use by animal feed processors—have offset declines in other uses, particularly soap manufacture.

To balance this production, we must seek export markets. These have remained relatively strong, despite a slight decline from 1980 when we exported 1.6 million metric tons—43 percent of production. In 1982 we exported 1.5 million metric tons, 40 percent of production.

The combination of a strengthening dollar, high interest rates and the unstable economic situation in many major markets have contributed to this decline. It has also encouraged an increasing use of palm oil in major Far East markets.

With the swing to boxed beef, plus the resulting availability of edible by-products at large packing plants, the ratio of edible to inedible tallow has changed markedly. This increasing supply could lead to increased marketing for edible tallow.

The explosion of fast-food outlets in the United States, along with an increase in eating-out at restaurants, has lifted the restaurant grease supply to the number two position as a raw material source.

Production levels of tallow are tied to the level of livestock slaughter, particularly beef. Therefore, the beef production cycle—not worldwide demand for tallow—controls the level of available supplies which must clear the market. Long-term storage has not, as yet, proven economically or physically feasible.

Tallow prices have not kept pace with inflation. The inevitable result is a squeeze between production cost and selling price.

I have just gone through a sizable list of problems. But there are also strengths.

Exports of tallow are at an all time high. Research has unlocked new uses for large amounts of tallow—notably its use in high-energy livestock feeds. The decline in tallow use in soaps appears to have bottomed out. And a worldwide economic recovery is underway.

Your association has been very effective in the export markets. I commend you for your work in improving trade servicing, technical education and demonstrations for new tallow and grease uses—particularly in the food and animal feed sectors.

We in the USDA will continue to help you solve the problems and capitalize on the opportunities. You are an important part of agribusiness, and we're all in it together.

Restoring the economic health of U.S. agriculture was the first order of business. We attacked the problem vigorously, and have achieved considerable success.

Last year a mounting surplus hung over the market. With exports down, this surplus acted as a giant depressant to our economy. As a short-term solution, we instituted the payment-in-kind program on several commodities.

As you all know, this plan proved to be enormously popular with U.S. farmers. As a result, the PIK program became the largest acreage set aside program in our history.

It has also been the most successful.

Surplus stocks have been reduced. Storage charges will be sharply reduced. And farm prices have made a gratifying recovery.

We also had a major drought along with the PIK program. In some areas the worst in 50 years. This further reduced production, but still leaves us with ample supplies for all market demands both at home and abroad.

In short, our farm economy is on the upswing—good news for all businesses connected with agriculture—including the rendering industry. This improves the market for all the industrial products which use tallow and fatty acids.

Developing nations have historically proven to be good markets for tallow. A demand for soap is one of the first results of rising incomes and rising expectations. And as these countries develop an improved food and livestock production capability, the demand for both tallow and meal rises sharply.

USDA administers a large-scale worldwide program of assistance to developing countries, designed to reduce malnutrition and encourage economic development.

We also continue to administer a large program of food shipments under the P.L. 480 Food for Peace program. In fact, last fall tallow was placed on the list of products available under the P.L. 480 program, for the first time since 1973. Active market development can now help create demand to use this availability.

Another form of export assistance is in the form of export credits. These can serve the rendering industry well. In fact, they already are. In El Salvador, Korea, Ecuador, Jamaica and elsewhere. These programs have been sharply expanded. We made available over \$5 billion in FY 83, compared to \$2 billion in FY 82.

Through USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, we continue to take the lead governmental role in developing export markets. An important part of that effort is promotion work carried out jointly with private industry. More than 50 groups work with FAS on a continuing basis. I'm happy to say that your association is one of these.

One of the best ways to help expand the export market for any specific U.S. agricultural product is to create a climate of success—a record of growth — for all U.S. agricultural products.

Just three years ago some world trade forecasters were predicting a continued rapid increase in U.S. farm exports. This prediction was based on the solid foundation of growth from \$8 billion in 1971 ... to \$24 billion in 1977 ... to \$44 billion in 1981.

But instead of the expected further large increases, we suffered decreases. In fiscal 1983, exports were down to about \$35 billion. The Carter embargo, a strong dollar, worldwide debt and recession—each contributed to this decline.

We are taking strong steps to get that volume back. And to build it higher.

We have also taken many important steps to rebuild our agricultural trade relationship with the Soviet Union. The latest step—on Aug. 25—was the signing of a new long-term grain trade agreement.

Another new trade agreement, one with the Peoples' Republic of China, encouraged that nation to lift its ban on imports of cotton and soybeans. I know your association has initiated talks with the Chinese about the potential use of tallow in hog feeds. Our improved relations should improve the climate for such discussions.

Also in the export market, we are increasing pressure on restrictive tallow. These involve negotiations with two of our largest customers: the European Economic Community and Japan.

All these and other related activities reflect a deep-seated commitment on the part of President Reagan, myself, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help make our nation not only a reliable supplier, but also the best supplier. But this is a team effort, and there are many jobs which can be done best by your industry.

You must continue to take the basic initiative. Do not wait for possible government actions, or for changes in the world market. Continue and accelerate you own market development efforts. Both in the U.S. and around the world. You have done a superb job of this. But there is still more to do.

Some industry observers feel that a must for a healthy rendering industry is to maintain a minimum export level of 45 percent of U.S. production.

Let me repeat one point I made early in these remarks. We are all in this business together. When we speak to overseas customers with one unified voice—it becomes a more effective voice.

Your association is doing a good job of representing your industry. The real key to success is to sit down with government, explain the problems of the industry, outline the steps the industry is taking to solve them, and tell us how government can help. I assure you we will be there with a desire to do all we can as a member of the U.S. agriculture and agribusiness team.

Thank you.

#

News Releases

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

USDA ENDS PECAN MARKETING ORDER PROCEEDINGS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 12—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today ended proceedings to establish a marketing agreement and order program for pecans grown in 16 states.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Agriculture John Ford said the need, required by law, for such a program was never adequately established during a lengthy rulemaking process which began last February.

Ford said the program was proposed by the Federated Pecan Growers' Associations of the United States and would have provided for research and development projects for pecans. Program costs would have been financed by assessments collected from all pecan shellers in the nation.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service conducted public hearing sessions on the proposal last winter in Atlanta, Ga., Dallas, Texas, Mobile, Ala., and Washington, D.C., and on Aug. 11 proposed ending the proceedings.

USDA received numerous comments both for and against the proposal by the Sept. 26 comment deadline, but none contained adequate reasons for USDA to alter the thrust of the preliminary decision, Ford said.

"Had the record adequately supported a need for the proposed program, the secretary of agriculture would have called for a referendum among producers," Ford said. "This proposal failed to get that far, and according to the law governing these proceedings, the secretary could not call for a referendum."

Currently, USDA has 48 marketing agreement and order programs in effect for fruits, vegetables and speciality crops, with many containing research and development provisions.

#

ECONOMIST TO PRESENT MORRISON MEMORIAL LECTURE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 12—Vernon Ruttan, a nationally recognized authority on agricultural economics, will present the 1983 B.Y. Morrison Memorial Lecture Oct. 18 in McAllen, Texas.

Ruttan will give his lecture, "Agricultural Research Policy Issues," before the annual meeting of the American Society for Horticultural Science. The lecture is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service.

Terry B. Kinney, Jr., administrator of the research agency, said this lecture is the sixteenth in a series of lectures commemorating the life and work of the late Benjamin Y. Morrison, the first director of USDA's National Arboretum.

Morrison was a horticulturist, landscape architect, scholar and lecturer who gained an outstanding reputation as a breeder of ornamental plants.

"Ruttan's research on the economics of technical change and agricultural development has won wide recognition," Kinney said. His book, "Agricultural Development: An International Perspective," has become a basic reference in the field of agricultural policy.

Ruttan is a professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota. He also has served in non-academic positions, including the President's Council of Economics Advisors, the Rockefeller Foundation at the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines, and the Government Relations and Economics staff at the Tennessee Valley Authority.

From 1973 to 1978, he was president of the Agricultural Development Council. He has served on a number of advisory committees and boards, including the Research Advisory Committee of the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Technical Advisory Committee to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research. He is a past-president of the American Agricultural Economics Association.

He has received six awards for published research, and he is a Fellow of the American Agricultural Economics Association, the

American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Council on Foreign Relations.

#

USDA ESTABLISHES GRADE STANDARDS FOR PUMPKIN

WASHINGTON, Oct. 12—On Oct. 13, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will revised official grade standards for fall and winter squash to include pumpkin, a USDA official said today.

Charles Brader, a marketing official with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the action was requested by members of the produce industry to provide an official basis for evaluating the quality and size of pumpkins.

Brader said pumpkin and fall and winter squash belong to the same botanical family, and the cultural and marketing practices are alike. Because of these similarities, the same grade standards can be applied to both.

Minor changes in definitions and grading procedures also are included in the revisions.

The Agricultural Marketing Service establishes grade standards and provides official grading for many food products. Use of the grading service is voluntary and paid for by the user.

The revised standards are scheduled to be published in the Oct. 13 Federal Register, available at many public libraires.

#

ADDITIONAL EXPANSION APPROVED FOR 1984 CROP INSURANCE PROGRAMS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 13—Twenty-five new counties in eight states will be getting crop insurance programs under a recent expansion approved by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

This brings to 533 the total number of new counties to get crop insurance programs next year, according to Merritt W. Sprague, manager of the corporation.

Under the most recent expansion, 17 new counties will get crop insurance programs for popcorn. They are Lee, Mason and Saline counties in Illinois; Huntington, Leflore, Washington and White counties in Indiana; Fremont, Monona and Sac counties in Iowa; Chase, Clay, Dawson and Holt counties in Nebraska; and Fairfield, Madison and Van Wert counties in Ohio

In Minnesota, Clay, Grant, Otter Tail, Polk and Hubbard counties will get dry bean insurance programs. Cleveland and Lincoln counties in North Carolina will get apple insurance programs, and Flagler County in Florida will get a program for potatoes.

In addition, this expansion offers insurance to all producers growing crops formerly covered by disaster payments, who were not included in the agency's initial major expansion.

Crops affected include barley, corn, grain sorghum, oats, wheat, cotton and rice. Producers of these crops will, upon request, be able to insure production on farmland not previously classified under the average area yield production system. Rates will reflect the risks assumed and coverages will be established primarily by using the producer's own production history.

The expansion is part of the agency's effort to provide farmers around the country with the opportunity to protect their crop investment with insurance.

#